

Learn and Serve Grant Competition Frequently Asked Questions

Q1: When is the deadline for calling Serve DC to ask questions regarding the grant competition?

A1: Thursday, April 21, 2005 at 5pm.

Q2: When is the Intent to Apply notification due?

A2: Wednesday, April 27, 2005.

Q3: If I am applying for this grant, should I look at Serve DC's Web site everyday for updates on the competition?

A3: All applicants should check Serve DC's Web site on a regular basis for announcements related to the grant competition and other pertinent information.

Q4: Is the April 27, 2005 deadline for applications incorrect?

A4: Yes. The deadline for applications for the Learn & Serve grant competition was extended to Wednesday, May 4, 2005 at 5pm. No exceptions.

Q5: When are the award notifications?

A5: Award notifications will be made at the end of May 2005.

Q6: When is the award date/when will we receive money?

A6: Sub-grantees will receive the funding in June 2005.

Q7: When is the project start date?

A7: The project start dates vary – June 2005 for Community-Based sub-grantees and August 2005 for Homeland Security sub-grantees.

Q8: Can I apply for both the Community-Based and the Homeland Security grants?

A8: Yes.

Q9: Can I include volunteer hours as an in-kind match?

A9: Yes.

Q10: With regards to the adult volunteers, how do you calculate the cost of a volunteer to include in the budget?

A10: Independent Sector calculates the value of a volunteer each year:
www.independentsector.org.

Q11: What does “provide youths opportunities to map their communities” (from the Community-Based RFA) mean?

A11: Applicants submitting proposals for Community-Based Learn and Serve funds must include activities that allow youth to research, explore, and map the needs and resources of their communities. You may visit <http://www.actionforchange.org/mapping/> for additional resources on community mapping.

Q12: Is community mapping required only for the Community-Based projects, or is it required for both the Community-Based and the Homeland Security projects?

A12: Community mapping is only required for the Community-Based projects. However, we encourage all Learn & Serve grantees to engage their participants in community-mapping activities thus, including opportunities for community mapping within the grant application is encouraged.

Q13: Can a school apply for a Community-Based Learn & Serve grant?

A13: Eligible applicants for the Community-Based grant are local nonprofits, community and faith-based organizations and local units of government that may provide after-school programming in collaboration with local schools. A public school is not an eligible applicant. However, a public school may apply for this grant by partnering with a community-based organization, which will serve as the primary applicant for the Community-Based grant.

Q14: Can a community-based organization (CBO) be the lead applicant for a School-Based/Homeland Security grant?

A14: A CBO may be the lead applicant for a Homeland Security grant if it has an established partnership with a DC middle/junior or high school. The project must be implemented in the partner school, and a Memorandum of Understanding that clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of both parties must be signed by the CBO and the school.

Q15: What is the total amount of funds available for both grants?

A15: There is \$113,420 available in Homeland Security grant funds and \$330,543 available in Community-Based grant funds.

Q16: How many awards will be given for each grant?

A16: Serve DC will award two Homeland Security grants of up to \$50,000 each and three to five Community-Based grants of up to \$60,000 each.

Q17: For current Serve DC Learn & Serve Homeland Security and Community-Based sub-grantees, are these grants continuations for us or brand new?

A17: Current sub-grantees should consider these grants as additional funding for their existing Learn & Serve projects. These grants are not continuation funding, and current sub-grantees interested in applying for the grants should follow all the guidelines for submitting an application.

Q18: Will there be a no-cost extension for the Community-Based grant?

A18: There is a possibility of a no-cost extension for the Community-Based grant. Decisions will be made at the end of the program year.

Q19: How does Serve DC define proximity to a Hot Spot?

A19: A project must operate in or within a three-block radius of a designated Hot Spot to receive extra points.

Q20: Is Hot Spot credit given for where the school/organization is located or where the participants live?

A20: Hot Spot credit is given based on where the Learn & Serve project will be implemented.

Q21: Is consideration given to the applicant's indirect costs?

A21: Yes. Applicant's may not designate more than 15% of grant funds to indirect costs. There are no exceptions. If there is an indirect cost requirement for an applying organization that is greater than 15%, we recommend designating the remaining percentage to match funds.

Q22: Do Homeland Security sub-grantees receive \$50,000 for two years or \$100,000 over two years?

A22: Homeland Security sub-grantees receive up to \$50,000 per year. Since this is a two-year grant, sub-grantees could potentially receive a total of \$100,000 during the grant period.

Q23: If we are currently a Serve DC Learn & Serve School-Based sub-grantee and now want to apply for a Community-Based grant, how can we tie the two projects together?

A23: You may design a program that links your current project with your proposed project. Examples may include using the same program goals and designing activities consistent with the community-based grant goals or designing a community-based project that partners with the existing school-based project activities.

Q24: What sort of commitment do we need from the partners identified in the application?

A24: You must have a written Memorandum of Understanding that states their commitment to partner on this project.

Q25: Do schools have to implement a project in their community?

A25: No. The project may be implemented in the school, but the school must form partnerships in the community. The idea is to maximize the impact that service-learning has within the school *and* community by forming effective partnerships with community organizations that can help the school achieve project successes. Additionally, community partnerships strengthen sustainability.

Q26: Knowing the students should have the freedom to plan to the project, how specific should we be about project details in the narrative section?

A26: The narrative section should illustrate project goals and activities. This can be as specific or general as you choose. Since we emphasize youth voice in choosing and planning projects, we advise including statements that address how this goal will be accomplished.

Q27: We are an umbrella organization. Can we use the funds to sub-grant money to our grantee organizations?

A27: Yes, but we must ensure that the sub-grantees are fulfilling the goals of Learn & Serve.

Q28: In the Accomplishments section, should I mention the accomplishments of my school's service-learning program or the school's overall accomplishments?

A28: You should address both areas.